

T.H. Bell Junior High School 165 West 5100 South Ogden, Utah 84405

March 4-5, 2008



Utah State Office of Education 250 East 500 South P.O. Box 144200 Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

THE REPORT OF THE VISITING TEAM REVIEWING

T.H. Bell Junior High School 165 West 5100 South

Ogden, UT 84405

March 4-5, 2008

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, March 4-5, 2008, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of T.H. Bell Junior High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the visiting team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Corey Jenkins is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at T.H. Bell Junior High School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at T.H. Bell Junior High School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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T.H. BELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Corey Jenkins	Principal
Wendy Long	1

Counseling

Patricia Camp	Counselor
James Simone	Counselor

Support Staff

Lana Braegger	Lisa Meacham	Talecia Sturdevant
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Carol Dudman	Ken Perkins	Mark Womack
Jennifer Duke	Karen Roylance	

T. H. BELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Become Empowered Lifelong Learners

BELIEF STATEMENTS

Meeting a variety of students need is necessary.

Instruction in academics, character education, and extracurricular activities develops productive citizens.

Nurturing respect for self and others is vital.

Understanding student learning is a shared responsibility of students, parents, teachers and the community.

Technology enhances student learning, teacher preparation, communication within the school, and communication between school and parents.

Enhancing communication skills is key to lifelong learning.

Meaningful and positive relationships promote learning.

Effective instruction prepares students to become productive and responsible members of a changing society.

Non-threatening environments enhance optimum learning.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

- 1. Learning to Learn
- 2. Communication Skills
- 3. Expanding and Integrating Knowledge
- 4. Personal and Social Responsibility

Date of visit: March 4-5, 2008

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Robinette Bowden, Ed.D., Syracuse Junior High School, Davis, Visiting Team Chairperson

Darci Barney, Tooele High School, Tooele School District

Sharon Jenks, Hurricane Middle School, Washington School District

Cathryn Davies, Mt. Logan Middle School, Logan City School District

Linda James, Scott Matheson Junior High, Granite School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

T. H. BELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

T. H. Bell Junior High School is a suburban junior high school located in Weber County, Utah. Students attending T. H. Bell primarily reside in the communities of Washington Terrace and Riverdale. Students come from three elementary schools (Roosevelt, Riverdale, and Washington Terrace), and will attend Bonneville High School along with students from South Ogden Junior High School.

a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?

The school enrollment is at its highest since the last accreditation. However, enrollment remains steady, ranging from 616 students in 2001 to a current enrollment of 660 students. Attendance has maintained a 90+ percentage rate over the course of the past six years. The percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch increased from 33.0 percent to 42.8 percent from 2001 to 2007. During the same time period, the percentage of special education students increased from 12.5 percent to 15.6 percent and the percentage of ethnic diversity has increased from 15.0 percent to 19.8 percent. Interviews with faculty and administration reference the availability of disaggregated data; however, the profile does not present this information.

b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?

The 2001 Visiting Team Report states, "Disaggregation of data based on gender and ethnicity would assist the school in identifying specific student populations that may be in need of additional support." The profile section of the accreditation report would be strengthened by a discussion and presentation of disaggregated data.

The school is to be commended for the use of profile data in day-to-day decision making and instructional processes. The Visiting Team learned more about this process from conversations with the administration and faculty than was possible to glean from the printed material. During interviews with the school administration, the Visiting Team learned that computer-based tables of disaggregated data, complete with graphical presentation of gain scores, are available to faculty at the beginning of the school year. Faculty members use this data to make adjustments in their instructional practice.

c) To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?

The departmental analysis presents the current strengths and limitations in an accurate manner. As previously reported, the profile would be strengthened by more attention to analysis and presentation of disaggregated data. Community perceptions presented in the surveys are in agreement with conversational information obtained in discussion with community focus groups. The faculty and administration effectively use information from the profile and stakeholder surveys to update the mission statement and belief statements.

Additional information on programs such as the Home Base and T.R.A.C. (Teaching Respect, Academics and Character) was more evident from the focus group discussions. Although there has been a change in the teaching staff, there remains a strong faculty consensus on an academic program focusing on the Core Curriculum and supportive personal relationships. Conversations with parents support a culture of mutual respect among students, parents, administration, and faculty. Students report a positive climate where they feel safe among peers and free to ask for assistance from staff members.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The Visiting Team strongly suggests that the faculty and administration attend to the recommendations of the first Visiting Team to present a detailed presentation of disaggregated data in the Profile section of the Accreditation Report.
- The Visiting Team also suggests that the faculty and administration refer to the disaggregated data to analyze the effectiveness of Home Base and T.R.A.C. in meeting the needs of the subgroups represented in the school.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs):

a) To what degree were the school's mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs developed and/or revised collaboratively by the school community to define a compelling purpose and vision for the school and to support student achievement?

The school's mission statement, beliefs and DRSLs were revised after the first accreditation report to make these statements easy for students, parents, and

teachers to remember. The faculty used acronyms from the name of the school, (Bell) and the school mascot (the Minuteman) to spell out the tenets of each.

The faculty decided to revise the DRSLs. Primarily, the school reported that the stakeholders felt the issue of safety had been addressed systematically and did not need to be further stated in the DRSLs.

b) To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's DRSLs?

The school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's DRSLs. Initially, the Visiting Team was concerned by the apparent lack of reference to the DRSLs. However, interviews with the faculty and administration revealed that the basic tenets of the DRSLs were addressed in the mission statement and belief statements. In most classrooms and throughout the school, the Visiting Team saw evidence of the belief statements and copies of the beliefs posted. Stakeholders were aware of the meaning implied in the acronyms BELL and MINUTEMAN.

b) Describe the indicators (measures) that have been developed to assess the school's progress in assessing the DRSLs.

Although the school does not refer actively to the DRSLs, the faculty does address the basic tenets of the mission and beliefs statements. The school administration and faculty monitor progress by reviewing student success in the T.R.A.C. program and discipline data. Home Base is used to continually reinforce literacy, numeracy, and character development. Students use the intervention portion of Home Base to remediate. Teachers use data from Home Base to gauge progress of students to meet the basic goals of the mission and belief statements.

d) To what extent do the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies and decisions of the school, and appear evident in the culture of the school?

Home Base and T.R.A.C. are integral parts of the school. The administration and faculty have much pride in the progress that they have made in ensuring that Home Base is a school-wide program. Funding from the community to provide technology for consistent delivery of the Home Base program is an essential part of the success of the program. Throughout the classroom visits, it was apparent that teachers support the consistent delivery of this intervention.

Curriculum:

a) To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards, the Utah Core Curriculum, reflecting the Utah Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success?

T.H. Bell has been working and continues to work on a program for curriculum mapping within its core subjects. The English Department has developed a pamphlet on the core standards that is presented to parents at the first of the year. The Social Studies Department is working toward a district-wide guide to ensure that teachers are teaching from the state standards. Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings are held bi-monthly to help ensure that the staff is focused and cooperative; however, this staff already seems to be naturally collaborative and supportive, which is undoubtedly a huge strength.

Life Skills learning is addressed in character training during Home Base. This is given to each teacher from a team that is responsible for gathering and presenting the information.

b) To what extent does the curriculum engage **all** students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills?

T.H. Bell has been given a list of crucial questions from Weber District to ensure student learning. They are: What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? What learning experiences and teaching strategies best promote understanding? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning? These questions are posted throughout the school and are used to help plan instruction. Science teachers are involved in writing CRTs, which has helped them understand the need for higher-level graphing. They have a project called "Planet Brochure" that encourages creativity and higher-level thinking. The English Department has also instituted a few project-based assignments, such as a murder trial that is held in conjunction with reading "The Most Dangerous Game." This is used to pull kids out of the memorization or recognition mode, and make them dig for opinions and support for said opinions.

c) To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's DRSLs?

The leadership team at T.H. Bell met during the summer to work on the school DRSLs. It was found that some of the old DRSLs had actually been accomplished and were no longer needed in a formal document. New DRSLs were then written and given to the staff at the beginning of school for input and approval. The intention was to include some things that were already evident in the teachers' classrooms, and to add a few that would allow for growth. For instance, several of the teachers on campus are already equipped with Smart Boards, but it is their goal to continue to seek support for all teachers to have Smart Boards as part of their DRSLs. Home Base has already begun to facilitate reading fluency and character education but, as a program in infancy, it will be part of the school's ongoing DRSLs until 2013 in order to move the school forward on its DRSL regarding varieties of learning strategies. Authentic, real-world application opportunities such as interviews, research, games, and simulations are also part of

the school's DRSLs until 2013, because these strategies have already been used successfully within the school.

d) How does the staff use assessments to drive the curriculum to ensure that ALL students can reach the intended learning outcomes?

T.H. Bell has looked closely at CRT, Iowa, and DWA scores to determine areas of strength and weakness. At this time they are moving toward common assessments within their departments, which will be of invaluable help in mapping their instruction and re-teaching. The Math, Science and English Departments are taking advantage of UTIPS testing to prepare their students for CRTs at year's end. To be sure that ALL students are given opportunities to learn and grow, the school has instituted a program called T.R.A.C., which is set up to monitor low achievers and provide leveled, individualized programs for enhanced instruction; basically, the school is doing whatever it can to reach students who are often seen as unreachable. T. H. Bell has been recognized for innovative thinking, and is experiencing tremendous positive results from the T.R.A.C. program.

Instruction:

a) To what extent do teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to enhance student learning?

The Visiting Team saw many different instructional strategies being used in the classrooms. Classrooms used computer labs, projectors, Smart Boards, write boards, lecturing, question-and-answer discussions, teacher conferences, and cooperative groups in their instruction. This seemed to address all of the student's needs and learning styles. The students were actively engaged in their own learning with the help of the teacher.

b) To what extent have the school and the staff developed strategies for the instruction that build the capacity for explicitly teaching the identified DRSL in every classroom?

The Visiting Team recognizes that the school has one day a week set aside to work after school with departments to train and work collaboratively. The school also has one day a month when the students are released early, and the teachers have that time allotted for training. Topics for these trainings include reading, safety, best practices, literacy, Understanding by Design, Competency-Based Instruction, and Classroom Strategies That Work.

c) To what extent is the school's professional development program guided by identified instructional needs, and how does it provide opportunities for teachers

to develop and improve their instructional strategies that support student learning?

New teachers are trained in backward design, and they have a mentor program that helps the new teachers adapt to the school and what is expected of them. Monday after-school time and the once-a-month early release day are used to help the new teachers. This also helps the experienced teachers see what they can do differently in their classes to help all types of learners.

d) To what extent are teachers proficient in their content area knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective on their own practices?

The Visiting Team recognizes that there is a high degree of mastery by many of the teachers; however, there are a few teachers working on endorsements for the subjects they are teaching. They use the Home Base class to track what the students are learning and what they need to change in their classes to assure that everyone is learning. They use the data from a teacher created data base to reteach or move on to something new in their classrooms. Through continual training that goes on throughout the year, the teachers learn what research shows is working in other schools. The mentoring program for new teachers is highly successful, and the teachers feel this is very beneficial in their professional growth.

e) To what extent does the school effectively implement a well-defined plan for the integration of technology into its curriculum, instruction, and assessments?

The Visiting Team saw technology used in the classrooms. Every classroom has a projector and computer for the teacher to use in instruction. Most of the math and special education classrooms have either a Smart Board or the smaller version of the write boards to help the students gain a more hands-on experience in the classroom. All of the classes are networked, and the Home Base classes receive, twice a week by e-mail, a PowerPoint presentation to help teach either literacy strategies or character education. This is highly successful in assuring that every student is receiving character education and literacy strategies that he/she can use on the rest of his/her classes.

Assessment:

a) To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school-wide assessments with performance standards based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?

The faculty at T. H. Bell is a cohesive and unified group. Faculty members collaborate on a variety of issues, ranging from curriculum to behavior. Ideas are

presented and welcomed by all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and administrators.

Concerns from a parent arose over the myriad homework policies in place. The staff responded with informal in-house surveys that culminated in a summer session to finalize a program that was workable for the staff. This program is now included in each teacher's disclosure. Another example of collaboration is the citizenship rubric. Teachers and students have clearly established criteria on which to determine the citizenship grade.

The faculty has been trained as a group in the use of rubrics, and uses them consistently in classes. Students appreciate knowing the criteria for an assignment or project, seeing examples of quality work, and knowing what is required before they even begin a project.

As a result of training in backward design, the faculty members consistently work together in their PLCs to ensure students are receiving additional instruction in areas of weakness. Teachers work together to plot a course of action to ensure the greatest student success. Due to the small faculty, many subjects are taught by only one teacher. Though the opportunity to create common assessments used by others within the school is not available, the faculty members do consult with others in their content areas and with resource teachers to glean from their skills and expertise in producing assessments.

b) To what extent does the school have a process to fairly and equitably assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving academic expectations?

T. H. Bell's Home Base class has evolved into a powerful, proactive program. Students are grouped with a cross-section of all three grade levels, together with a teacher. Students remain with the same teacher throughout their three years at Bell. Home Base teachers have access to all the grades for each of their Home Base students. Home Base teachers regularly check their students' progress in each of their classes, and provide help and remediation as needed. Thursday is intervention day, when students may return to a class to make up work, receive extra help with understanding a concept, or take a missed test.

Students can be identified by the classroom teacher, a counselor, parent, administrators, or even by themselves for the T.R.A.C. program. This program is fluid and open ended, based on the progress and needs of the student. Students are assessed and placed on the level of T.R.A.C. according to their individual situation or needs.

c) To what extent does the professional staff use data to assess the success of the school in achieving its academic expectations?

T. H. Bell is a data-driven school. Every teacher has ready access to all standardized test results. In their PLCs teachers use this data to identify weaknesses and plot a course of action to remedy problems. Online CRT testing will occur in each of the core subjects this year for rapid and current results.

d) To what extent does the school's professional development allow for opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies?

Each Monday teachers meet from 2:30-3:30 in their PLCs. This time is devoted to going over available data and identifying strategies to better reach the desired learner outcomes within their departments. One Wednesday afternoon a month the faculty meets for professional development. Topics addressed over the years include backward design, competency-based instruction, and classroom strategies that work.

e) To what extent is there organizational agreement on the use of a school-wide scoring tool to assess the identified DRSL?

Each department addresses the DRSLs in its own content area. Teachers use Home Base to monitor student progress in each of their classes. As the DRSLs are the core of their teaching, how a student does in a class is used as the indicator of how he/she is doing on the DRSLs.

The school-wide action plan addresses each of the DRSLs and its indicators. Though the Visiting Team felt that the action plan was very broad and could be seen as overwhelming, the faculty members strongly expressed that they felt these steps and goals were important. As a faculty, they had decided that this action plan was important to ensure that each DRSL was addressed and worked on consistently.

The school's belief statements are written to include the DRSLs, so that these are in the forefront and are continually the focus of every stakeholder.

CHAPTER 3: NAAS SUPPORT STANDARDS

Leadership and Organization:

a) To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate that actively supports teaching and learning?

The administration is accessible to students, faculty members, and the community throughout the school day and evening. The school leadership team functions

effectively in partnership with the administration to promote data analysis, professional development, and a positive school climate.

b) To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative to monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness?

The school leadership uses effective decision making through a program known as T.R.A.C., which includes data-driven tiers of intervention to promote student learning. Working collaboratively, teachers, counselors, and administrators use the T.R.A.C. program to meet the needs of individual students.

Also through a collaborative decision-making process, the faculty selects a yearly focus for professional development.

c) To what extent does the leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and allocation and use of resources at the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment which aligns with the school goals, DRSLs, and school improvement?

The leadership is creative in getting resources for technology to support the Home Base intervention, and in working with Weber School District to provide funding for major renovations in the building—including, but not limited to, remodeling, upgrading and re-carpeting. This improves the environment for learning in a building that is approximately forty years old. The PTSA and sports booster clubs support school initiatives. The administration also uses grant and LAND Trust monies to assure a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment that aligns with the school goals.

d) To what extent does the school leadership empower the entire school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning through meaningful roles in the decision-making process?

The Visiting Team was impressed with the "grassroots" initiatives that came from teacher leadership groups. Teacher leaders meet during the summer months to formulate school improvement goals, which are then ratified by the faculty and implemented throughout the school. The PTSA, Community Council, and teachers support the work on numeracy, literacy and character development.

e) To what extent has the school established a formal system through which each student has an adult staff member who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school-wide expectations for student learning?

The Home Base initiative is the formal system through which each student has an adult staff member who knows the student well and assists the student in

achieving the school-wide expectation for learning. Each student is assigned to a Home Base teacher for three years. Home Base is an independent class period which is held each day. Students are assigned to multi-graded classrooms. During each day of the week, students participate in focused advisory activities. One day, the lesson might be a PowerPoint presentation on literacy, while another day the topic is numeracy. An intervention period is provided each week during which students may work with a course teacher to remediate class work. Character development lessons are also delivered through the Home Base period. Teachers have access to student grades and function as advisors for students.

CHAPTER 4: NAAS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

- a) To what extent has the school developed and implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan using Collaborating for Student Achievement, the Utah accreditation/school improvement process that is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis?
 - T. H. Bell takes a proactive approach to school improvement. No longer are they content with putting out fires; they want to prevent them from ever beginning. As a faculty, they use their PLCs and early out time to address concerns and plan how to best meet their goals. There is good ongoing collaboration among all faculty members; they continually seek opportunities to share ideas and strategies that work.
- b) To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through an aligned and ongoing professional development plan focused on the school's goals for improvement?
 - Through the dedicated time each month on the early-out Wednesday, the staff receives instruction on topics to improve classroom instruction. The yearlong focus is decided by the administration. A guest expert will introduce the year's topic at the annual fall retreat, and then each month's lesson is taught by teachers within the building. This allows for each teacher to be involved in the learning process and become the in-house expert.
- c) To what extent is the new/revised school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up and is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?
 - The new action plan takes into account the previous plan and the many accomplishments made since the last visit. As the school and stakeholders

reworked the DRSLs to better reflect the new focus and direction of the school, the action plan was rewritten to mirror the same work. The whole faculty worked to create a plan that addressed each of the DRSLs adequately.

To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?

The turnover in staff has been significant since the last visit. To ensure that quality instruction has been maintained, considerable efforts have been put in place to train and mold teachers to continue the positive momentum. Teachers felt they had many opportunities to attend outside conferences and trainings in addition to those done on their early-out days to hone their skills.

When a problem or issue is noticed, it is confronted and worked on as a school community to find the most appropriate solution.

e) What significant progress has been made in implementing the original action plan since the last full visit?

Significant progress has been made by the faculty and staff at T. H. Bell since the 2002 visit. Multiple lines of assessment are available for each of the DRSLs addressed in the action plan. Even with a variance of direction through change in administration, the vision has become clearer and the school has picked up momentum through the implementation of the new DRSLs, the availability of data, and the development of PLCs.

- f) What significant progress has the school made in addressing the major recommendations of the previous Visiting Team and/or review team?
 - T. H. Bell has addressed each of the recommendations from the first visit, except for including substantive disaggregated data. It is clear from the work the school has done and the plans now in place that they have made progress in making their school an effective learning environment with a clear and focused vision.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

a) To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?

The Visiting Team observed strong evidence of community building and positive working relationships. There is a climate of strong support and involvement by the Community Council and PTSA. The administration and staff have built a climate of parent and community involvement and student connection to the

school through the many activities offered at the school during instructional time and extracurricular programs.

The staff and administration foster positive working relationships through various professional development activities. These include PLCs and an early-out day once a month that provides time for professional development activities. The Visiting Team was impressed by the fact that the professional development is conducted by the staff members themselves, building a climate of trust and respect among the staff and administration.

The Home Base advisory and advocacy program provides students with a connection to teachers. This relationship continues for all three years a student is enrolled in the school. Students have a staff member they can trust and turn to during their entire junior high school experience.

b) To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?

Collaborative networks reaching into the community were observed by the Visiting Team. There is a continual effort made to engage parents in the school community. Weber School District's computer-based Portal system allows the community to stay well informed of student progress as well as school functions. It provides e-mail notification of absences, and parents can check grades and lunch account balances at any time. Teachers can upload files to keep students current in their assignments when they miss school or assignments.

Seventh grade students have a half-day orientation to become familiar with junior high school life. Later in the year, the seventh grade students are involved with a Job Shadowing day. Reality Town brings in parents and community members to interact with ninth grade students about career possibilities and adult responsibilities as they prepare to move on to high school.

There are three parent teacher conferences each year. The school mails midterm and term grades home with a school newsletter.

The booster club, made up of parents and community members, supports general school extracurricular programs by conducting fundraising activities.

Student recognition programs identify deserving students in achievement and behavior on a monthly and/or annual basis. Names are displayed in the newsletter, on the school website, and inside the school.

c) To what extent has the school engaged the school community in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?

The school engages the community through a survey posted on the website. Parents and students were involved in the focus group discussions, and PTSA and Community Council members were involved in the accreditation process. The School Improvement and Accreditation manual has been posted to the school website.

d) How are results of school improvement identified, documented, used and communicated to all stakeholders?

Improvement has been identified through surveys of teachers, parents and students. Results have been documented in the 2008 School Improvement and Accreditation document.

The entire document has been posted on the school website. It includes DRSLs, action plans, and reports of progress available to all stakeholders. Information about the school's progress is also distributed through a twice-quarterly newsletter sent with student midterm and term grades. Failing notices are sent by all teachers between midterm and final term grades.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the faculty and administration on the positive climate of mutual respect and support. The faculty models collegiality in the creation and implementation of such initiatives as a school-wide late work policy, Home Base, and T.R.A.C.
- The Visiting Team commends the faculty for the school's pervasive use of technology throughout all curriculum areas. Further commendation is given to all stakeholders for supporting and providing funding to purchase and update various forms of technology, including but not limited to LCD projectors, calculators, and Interwrite boards.
- The faculty and staff are commended for the positive climate of the school and their sincere dedication to meeting the needs of all students by providing time within and outside of the day to re-teach when needed.
- Stakeholders are commended for the support provided for extracurricular and sports programs. Stakeholders, especially the PTSA, are to be commended for collaborative participation in the accreditation process. The administration is commended for holding community meetings in the evening, when a diverse

cross-section of parents are able to attend. Further commendation is given for efforts to communicate with the stakeholders through school newsletters, the website, and quarterly progress notes (failing notices). The administration is commended for its desire to expand community wide participation in both PTSA and Community Council meetings for the purpose of providing input to evaluate and refine school-wide programs.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty and administration continue the development and implementation of rubrics and common assessments to foster quality learning.
- The Visiting Team recommends continued use of school-wide data, with specific attention to disaggregation and interpretation of subgroup needs. Continued support, both financial and philosophical, for the T.R.A.C. program will provide a venue to meet the needs of individuals and subgroups.
- The Visiting Team recommends that all stakeholders review the extensive action plan and prioritize specific goals to be addressed prior to the next accreditation visit.
- Explicit reference to the DRSLs is apparent through the Home Base program and in isolated departmental notes. However, further development of a means to collect and analyze data on DRSL attainment at the classroom level should be developed. Although there is a close relationship between the DRSLs and the belief statements, the Visiting Team recommends more explicit reference to the DRSLs during instruction. The Visiting Team supports the administration's recommendation that "existing DRSLs need to be reinforced as a greater part of the foundation of instructional decision making."